

**METHODS OF REDUCING FRIABILITY OF CEREAL PRODUCTS,  
POTATO CHIPS, AND FREEZE-DRIED FOODS, OF INCREASING  
SHELF LIFE OF CEREAL PRODUCTS, AND OF DELAYING  
RANCIDITY OF NUTS**

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**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

The invention provides methods of reducing the friability of food items such as cereal  
products (including ready to eat cereals and corn and tortilla chips), of potato chips, and of  
10 freeze-dried foods. The methods involve contacting the food item with water and then drying  
the food item to approximately its original water content. The water may be applied by any  
convenient means so long as it does not cause overhydration of the food item. The invention  
further provides methods of delaying the development of rancidity in nuts. The methods  
comprise contacting the nuts with water. In preferred forms, the methods comprise causing  
15 mild abrasion of the nuts to facilitate hydration.

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